

# UNISON Newcastle City Branch

## Branch Committee Minutes – 7 March 2016

**PRESENT:** P Gregory, N Bone(NB), W Aitman(WA), L Ashbridge(LA), L Patterson, M Wilkinson, A Carson, P Barwick, J Yugire(JY), A Stewart, G Smith, T Cook, D Muse, K Bensley, T Leddicoat, U Kaferawanthu, E Whitby(EW), J Horne, P Gilroy(PG), J Bird (Chair), N Ramanandi(NR), L Hardie, JM Nicholson, D Mead, J Imhoof, N Oliver

**In Attendance:** K Loughlin (KL), L Reeve (LR)

**APOLOGIES:** A Hamilton, E Wilson, L McGurk, E Thorp, L Jackson

### 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

### 2. Minutes for Confirmation

Branch Committee January – AGREED, no matters arising

Branch Education - no meeting

Health and Safety - no meeting

### 3. Branch Membership

Update given. LA added that 4 new members from schools were added last week. One from Newcastle Bridges and three from Byker Primary.

### 4. Financial Report

No report until April. PG stated Branch accounts are very healthy and are in the AGM report. There is an increase in Branch reserves.

- Affiliations, Donations and Correspondence:
  - No anti-racist event at Monument in Newcastle on St Georges Day due to International Market. Social at the Cluny; £100 donation gets four free tickets. Donation of £250 **AGREED**
  - There were a number of thank you letters for donations
  - South Africa students – PG wants to mention the link and have members see the benefits of what we have done in a later meeting
  - Conference Delegation **AGREED** and will be as follows:
    - Lynda Hardie, Val Suddes, Mavreen Ncube, Cath McGuinness, James Imhoof, Iqbal Sayed, Nicky Ramanandi – for Local Government, with Nicky dropping out for National Delegate Conference as she is a regional delegate
- PG mentioned motions submitted. EW asked if these motions could be circulated which was agreed.

### 5. Health & Safety - no report

### 6. Workforce Development & Learning

WA gave update on next Shop Stewards course and the next ULR Forum

JY – Bridges to Learning project has been funded for another year.

### 7. Directorate Reports

PG gave verbal report/update on the care services review, recovery support, and the CJC. He also spoke on devolution, commercial development and the LGPS. Discussion followed on several topics.

LH confirmed meeting taken place with Ewan Weir, Karen Simmons, and Mick McCracken to discuss Family Insights being rolled out to east & west teams, briefing to follow on detail. Work to start on Social Work Event by branch.

NR gave an update on Communities.

DM gave an update on upcoming YHN industrial action.

LA: an addendum to the Branch Committee report was noted.

LR asked for volunteers for the Latitude and Glastonbury music festivals. She asked for help spreading the word and outlined what was expected of volunteers.

Pay moved up the agenda due to queries – KL gave update. The unions are still waiting for a response from GMB. Their ballot closes at noon on 14 March 2016. There has been no comment from GMB other than they are disappointed we are rejecting the pay offer.

## **8. Branch Officer Reports**

No further updates.

Liz Jackson, Women's Officer, sends her apologies. The Women's AGM is on 19 March at 10:00. The next meeting is on 27 April at the Civic.

## **9. National and Regional Committees and Conferences**

NR gave update on Local Government Service Group. Debbie Lydon has been elected to replace Merv Butler, who is retiring as Chair. Nicky Ramanandi and Joyce Guthrie were re-elected to serve as Vice Chairs.

PG gave an update regarding the Trade Union Bill. It is currently being debated in The Lords. If we have to move from DOCAS to Direct Debit, membership organisers will be recruited by the union to assist with the task.

EW: There will be a joint march for NHS on Saturday 9 April organised by BMA, Tyne and Wear Momentum, Peoples Assembly and asked if Branch could support. This was agreed.

PG spoke on UNISON social events, in particular, the Durham Miners Gala. Traditionally a coach is put on; last year only  $\frac{3}{4}$  full. Please let him know if you are going to commit to going to the DMG. Discussion followed.

## **Part 2.**

**1. General Update** – covered.

**2. Budget** – covered.

**3. Pay** – covered above.

**4. Branch Topics/Special Branch Committee Themes** – Not covered due to time constraints. PG suggested topics/suggestions should be emailed to the office.

**5. European Referendum** – UNISON does not have a solid policy position on Europe. The committee was asked to study a short survey and there was round table discussion. Although the majority of the committee were in favour of remaining in Europe, there was a divide in opinion on whether UNISON should take a firm stance on leaving or remaining.

The survey has since been sent out to members.

## **Part 3.**

**Any other Business**

None

**Date of Next Meeting – Monday 11 April 2016, 9:30 am, Committee Room, Newcastle Civic Centre.**